Revenue (1948) Department.

M SERIES.

G.O. No. 353

Dated 16-9-1948

[Despatch Abstract.]

Village Establishments - System - Reorganisation proposals consideration - Postponed - Papers Recorded.

Back Papers.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
Ms	210	Rev	30-1-48				
"	2257	"	6-10-41				
"	3307	"	28-12-38				

Further Papers

G.O	No	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
Judgt.	1879	49 Rev.	30-4-49				

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

To A.S.III

The file relates to the proposal to reorganize the present system of village establishments.

2. In 1946, the Cabinet Salaries Committee recommended that the Government should consider the question of replacing the present system of village establishments by a more efficient and economic one. The Finance (Reorganisation) Department took up the question and framed a scheme, under which the duties of Karnam and village headman would be combined in one office, which would be filled by a person with superior educational qualifications, who would be a whole-time Government servant on a pay in the scale of Rs.25-1-40 or Rs.30-1-50 and a dearness allowance of Rs.16/- per mensem with no leave and pensionary benefits and having chances of promotion as clerk in a revenue office, mainly t luk office. He would be allowed only one village servant, who would be appointed and paid as under the existing system. The officer would also be given an imprest, to enable him to employ coolies on occations when the single village servant could not cope with the work. The scheme was referred to the Board of Revenue for remarks.

3. The Board objected to the scheme on the following grounds:--

(1) the land revenue system of Madras with the syste of village administration through the village officers has been in existence for centuries and has stood the test of time and has proved its use in procurement work;

(2) the retrenched village officers may come under the influence of Communists and there may be trouble for the Government;

(3) except in a few small villages, it will be impossible for one village officer to do the work of two village officers and there is also the danger that the proposed amalgamation of the two posts may result in fraud and misappropriation of Government money;

(4) in the districts where the hereditary system has be in vogue, the relationship between the village officers and the villagers is more cordial than in districts in which the hereditary system is not in force and such a cordial relationship creates an atmosphere conducive to smooth working of the village administration; and

(5) there would be no appreciable economy if the scheme is given effect to and it would be false economy to entrust the interests of villagers to the tender mercies of a careerist who has no root in the village and really no stake in its welfare.

4. This Department, while observing that some of the reasons given by the Board were entitled to considerable weight, held that, in view of the radical changes in the existing system of Land Revenue administration under contemplation, the question of re-organizing the age-old system of village establishments should be postponed for consideration at a future date.

5. At the meeting of the Re-organisation Committee held on 18-10-1947, the Chairman of the Committee, Mr.T.A.Ramalinga Chettiar, suggested another scheme, under which one senior Revenue Inspector on a pay of Rs.75 and clerk on Rs.45/-*with dearness allowance of Rs.18 per mensem each belonging to the regular staff

*or Rs.50

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staff of the Revenue Department, with pensionary and other rights would be in charge of a number of villages corresponding to two or three of the existing headman's or Karnam's groups and would discharge all the duties of the present Village Officers, doing azmoish and other outdoor work by turns, so that one of them would always be available at the headquarters village for receiving reports on crimes, if any, and generally to give any help that the ryots may require of him. There would be one servant for each village and one more to accompany the officers on their tours and the conditions of service of the servants would be the same as those of the present village servants.

6. The scheme was referred to 3 officers for their personal opinion, viz., Mr.M.V.Subramaniam (Secretary Education and Public Department) Mr.S.Venkateswaran (Collector of Chingleput) and the Revenue Secretary. Their views are contained in their letters at pages 47-57. c.f. Mr.Subramanian lays emphasis on the necessity of having an officer of some local standing with an intimate knowledge of the village and its accounts and the evils of "non-residence". Mr.S.Venkateswaran practically proposes a scheme of his own with two officers for a group of villages the work being divided on a functional basis corresponding to the duties now performed by Headmen and Karnams respectively and a large number of menials somewhat corresponding to peons - but without pensionary benefits. The Revenue Secretary's personal opinion is that the most suitable course would be to make the unit of revenue administration coincide with that of local administration He would suggest that the future of the land revenue system and the patten of local self Government should be awaited.

7. The matter was considered by the Reorganisation Committee on 7-1-1948. The Committee felt that a change in the system of village establishments was necessary, in view of the facts (i) that the accounts prepared by the present village officers are not reliable, (2) that the village officers take part in politics at the expense of efficiency and (3) that their demands for higher salaries, in view of the all-round increase of salaries cannot be met owing to the enormous size of the present village establishment. The Committee agreed with the view expressed by the Revenue Secretary that the unit of Revenue Administration should coincide with the unit of local administration. They however, did not come to any definite conclusion, but have suggested two more schemes for trial in a non hereditary area. (They seem to think that each scheme should be tried in 2 taluks). The schemes are the following:-

The Committee stated that it was not possible to come to a final and a definite conclusion at once on this matter.

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30-1-1948.

(1) three or four villages may be grouped together and two lower division clerks may be appointed to do the work of both the Karnam and the village Headman. They will be serving in the village for three years and be eligible for promotion. They will be located in the central village of the group and the group will be so constituted that no point in it will be more than 5 miles from the office. The number of village servants will be reduced to the barest minimum. The posts of Revenue Inspectors will be unnecessary.

(2) The Karnam will continue as at present but in the place of the headman working in a Pancyayat area, an officer of the grade of a lower division clerk will be appointed to collect all the dues to the Government as well as the taxes due to the Panchayat, the Panaye panchayat contributing on a percentage basis for his services. He will perform the other duties of a village Headman also. The number of village servants

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servants will be reduced to the barest minimum. In this case al: te-ordinary Revenue Inspector will be relieved of his duties wit! reference to collection of revenue, so that the number of Revenue Inspectors mightbe reduced.

The Committee also suggests that the feasibility of abolishing the hereditary right to village offices may be examined by the Government as, if one of the schemes is to be adopted, the hereditary right will have to go.

8. As observed by the Secretary, radical changes in the Land Revenue system are under contemplation and the pattern of Local Administration for the villages has not yet been decided. In the circumstances, it seems that the question of re-organisin the present system of village establishments should wait. If it is considered that the proposals of the Re-organisation Committe should be proceeded with, they may be referred to the Board of Revenue for remarks with an estimate of cost. As for abolition of the hereditary right to village offices, the question was considered in the past in G.Os.No.3307, Revenue dated 28-12-1938 and No.2257 Revenue dated 6-10-1941 and, for the reasons given in para 12 on pages 20-21 n.f. of the latter G.O., it was decided not to make any change.

9 For orders.

The Board has already stated that it is not in favour of any change in the existing system of villages- Administration Secretary has also expressed the view that the question of re-er re-organising the present system of village establishments will have to wait till the Government divide the future of the Land Revenue system and also the pattern of Local Self Government they propose for villages.

If the Government consider that the one or the other of the alternative suggestions made by the Committee shoul be tried, the remarks of the Board of Revenue may be invited on the suggestions together with an estimate of the cost of the respective proposals. Prima facue proposal (1) at page 39 Supra appears more suitable than (2) as it may be desirable to have a separate set of officers for Revenue Administration.

The Board's views may be obtained in the first instance.

Sd/-xxxxxxx ,
xxxxxxxxx.2-2-1948.

I think that this may await decision of our Land Revenue Policy.

Sd/- Hon'ble Minister (Land Revenue)
4-2-1948.

Sd/- Hon'ble Minister (Finance)
6-2-1948

To

Finance (Reorganisation) Department may see and after that department has seen, the papers may be recorded with a call book entry for 15-8-1948

Sd/-xxxxxxxxxx,
7-2-1948. Fwi (Reorgn)

6212 C/48
7-2-48

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Finance (R&R) Department.

(Previous Finance notes on page 40 above.)

The notes of the Revenue Department on page 40-45 above and the minutes of Hon'ble Minister (Revenue) and Hon'ble Minister (Finance) at 'A' above may be perused and the file returned to Revenue.

The Committee may be informed of the decision of the Government on the question at its next meeting on 16-2-1948.

Sd/-xxxxxxxx,
9-2-1948.

Fin no. 69012/46-Re-10.
11-2-48

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

call book entry will be made against 15-8-1948, as already ordered.

...e papers may be recorded with a Call Book entry against 15-8-48 as already ordered at page 45 ante.

G.O.Ms.No.353 dated 16-2-1948.

ORDER:-

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Sd/-xxxxxxxxxx,
16-2-1948.

Abstract: Village Establishments - System - Reorganisation proposals - Consideration - Postponed - Papers Recorded.

/True copy/

S. Jayaraman
30/3/54
Office Assistant,
Madras Record Office.

29/3/54